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ABSTRACT

Using qualitative inquiry, this study provided a descriptive autobiographical revelation of the various developmental experiences of a preservice French teacher. A major focus on the subjective aspects of the teacher candidate's development provided additional information concerning her mental and personal life and the influence they have on her development as an educator. Triangulation, or the inclusion of multiple methods and sources of data, was used to provide a more thorough and accurate analysis and interpretation of the results. A biographical sketch, transcripts, and test scores provided objective measures of the preservice teacher's development while coursework documents, a personal diary, and student teaching journal traced her subjective development. Data analysis revealed four distinct phases of development: formal language learning, pedagogical instruction, second language acquisition, and the student teaching experience. Recommendations and methodological reflections are offered. The author's coursework for academic credit in formal language learning, scores on the National Teacher Exams (NTE) Core Battery and Specialty Test in French, and coursework in the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program are appended. (Contains 35 references.) (Author)

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ED 365 109

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF A PRESERVICE SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHER'S DEVELOPMENT

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Arts in Teaching

Degree

Memphis State University

Mary D. Edwards

December 1993

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my loving parents who have provided me with invaluable educational opportunities. It is the result of their generosity, encouragement and support that I have the story I have to tell.

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I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my committee members, Dr. Katherine Abraham, Dr. Arthur Garner, and Dr. Robert Kleinsasser. Their assistance, encouragement, and support were invaluable to the completion of this thesis. To Robert Kleinsasser, in particular, I would like to express a special note of thanks. For his guidance and willingness to share so generously of his time, I am deeply grateful. It was his genius and expertise that both challenged and encouraged my thinking and writing; without him this investigation would not have been possible.

I would also like to thank my friends and family who tolerated me and even believed in me when I was frustrated and ready to give up. I am grateful for their patience and endurance as I worked on this project.

Finally, I would like to thank the two most important people in my life--my parents. Throughout my life, they have always stood behind me and encouraged me to persevere. To them, I express my sincerest love and appreciation.

ABSTRACT

As educational reformers attempt to make effective changes in the ways schools work in the United States, a broadened understanding of teaching and learning is necessary. Until recently, efforts made toward extending the knowledge base concerning teachers and teaching have overlooked a significant aspect, the development of preservice teachers. Furthermore, little reported research explores the complex and multifaceted development of a preservice second language educator. Using qualitative inquiry, this study provided a descriptive auto-biographical revelation of the various developmental experiences of a preservice French teacher. A major focus on the subjective aspects of the teacher candidate's development provided additional information concerning her mental and personal life and the influence they have on her development as an educator.

Triangulation, or the inclusion of multiple methods and sources of data, was used to provide a more thorough and accurate analysis and interpretation of the results. A biographical sketch, transcripts, and test scores provided objective measures of the preservice teacher's development while coursework documents, a personal diary, and a student teaching journal traced her subjective development.

The data was presented as a narrative account of the teacher candidate's educational and professional development. Interspersed throughout were her personal thoughts, perceptions, reactions and concerns. As her story unfolded, the data analysis revealed four distinct phases of development: formal language

learning, pedagogical instruction, second language acquisition and the student teaching experience.

The resulting analysis uncovered the general sources of teacher development, the multiple sources of second language teacher development and the variety of knowledges that a preservice teacher must acquire. Also discussed were the understandings, gained by this investigation, concerning second language acquisition.

The findings from this study provided insight and direction for other preservice teachers interested in learning more about the complex nature of teachers and teaching. It recommended the inclusion of more reflective and introspective activities throughout the course of a teacher's development. It further suggested that preservice teachers become researchers of their own experiences, assumptions and beliefs concerning their development, so that, collectively, an enhanced understanding of teacher development can be gained. Finally, it offered an invitation to preservice teachers, and others involved in education, to make use of their own subjectivity and the benefits of qualitative inquiry to tell their own personal and unique stories.

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CHAPTER I

OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT AND REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Overview of Study

For those who are in the process of becoming a teacher as well as those who are charged with developing and preparing future educators, an understanding of teaching and the transformation one makes from student to teacher is an important and necessary goal. Without full understanding of teaching and teachers, learning how to be, or teaching someone how to become a teacher is a difficult and complex task.

To be sure, the process of becoming a teacher is not a simple undertaking nor is it complete with the attainment of a teaching certificate or master's degree. Although one might define herself as a teacher as a result of the completion of certain requirements, this status gives very little information about who or what this teacher is. Certain objective measures such as grade point average, completed coursework and test scores help to describe, to some degree, particular aspects of the transformation the teacher candidate undergoes; however, these measures are of limited value in elaborating the nuance and subtlety of such an intricate process.

It is no wonder that there is often misunderstanding and disagreement over the best way to define and develop teacher candidates when we consider the ways in which people have sought to define and describe teachers and teaching in general. For example, many of the existing studies that have served

to describe and define teachers and their work have focused on teacher practice and behavior in the classroom and how the two relate to transfer of the curriculum (Millies, 1992; Shulman, 1987). On the whole, researchers have studied and elaborated the more objective aspects of teaching. Studies on student test performance, classroom management practices, methodology and curriculum, to name but a few, dominate educational research and have provided policymakers with enough information to make decisions as if they well understood the lives of teachers. In other words, so much of what is known about teachers, and unfortunately most of what curriculum and policy changes are based on, comes from a research and knowledge base that evaluates and categorizes teachers according to what they do. Little attention has been given to the understanding and development of educators based on who they are or what they go through (Goodson, 1992; Millies, 1992; Shulman, 1987).

In order to enhance understanding of teaching and of the process of becoming a teacher, a more complete picture is needed. It has been documented that a teacher's mental life, personal biography, predispositions and perceptions of work and the workplace have great influence on that individual's life as an educator (Carter, 1993; Goodson, 1992; Kleinsasser, 1992). Furthermore, as Goodson (1992) asserts, "to understand teacher development and curriculum development, and to tailor it accordingly, we need to know a great deal more about teachers' priorities. We need in short to know more about teachers' lives" (p. 111). Perhaps then, an elaboration of the more

subjective, yet often ignored, facets of a teacher's development would be valuable in enriching our understanding of teaching.

Fortunately, researchers have recently been giving more attention to the voice of teachers and increasingly, the need for studies which examine biographical descriptions of their lives and educational experiences is being supported by educational literature, as detailed in the following review. Still, the profession has given insufficient attention to those who are in the process of becoming educators and to their preservice experiences. Moreover, educational research has only begun to explore what is known about teacher education, in general, and what is known about the development of second language educators, in particular.

The focus of this thesis will be to describe and analyze, what shall be called the subjective reality of a preservice second language educator. For the purposes of this study, it is an individual's unique educational and life experiences intertwined with personal thoughts, feelings, reactions and concerns and influenced by perceptions and interpretations of her particular social context, that combine to create her subjective reality (see also, Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The literature review emphasizes the need for qualitative studies that are descriptive, narrative accounts of teachers lives and examines the value of subjectivity as it relates to the ways in which we pursue greater understanding of teachers and teaching. By the revelation of the subjective aspects of a preservice teacher's experience, this study provides a viable

alternative for those seeking to extend the knowledge base of teaching and of the development of teachers.

Literature Review

General Research Trends: Qualitative versus Quantitative

In general, people have historically been conditioned to think of research as a process involving a formal instrument, a large number of people and data that are reduced to numerical relationships. In other words, most students and academicians are more familiar with the quantitative approach to research. Quantitative studies are supported by the positivist or scientific paradigm and strive to observe, measure, and describe social phenomena as if the researcher, the methods of inquiry and the subject of research were objective, detached, uncontaminated and value-free (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Eisner (1992) observes that by the use of quantitative modes of inquiry and adherence to procedural and ontological objectivity, researchers think they offer an accurate view of reality. In other words, if we are objective in our investigations, in our views and in our methods, we believe we are able to see and tell it like it is.

In contrast, there is qualitative research which is more open, evolutionary and emerging. Beginning with a problem statement and design, this type of inquiry sees new questions emerge, and interpretations develop and change throughout the research process. In qualitative research it is the social construction of reality that is important and therefore, our interpretation of events is as important as our prediction of them (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

Qualitative inquiry and subjectivity. If quantitative research is revered for its objectivity, qualitative research is criticized for its lack of it. However, the notion of subjectivity, be it either good or bad, is an inevitable component of research and is present to some degree in all types of inquiry. While subjectivity is seen as undesirable in quantitative studies, it has a significant place in qualitative research. Subjectivity, says Peshkin (1988), is the quality of an investigator that affects the results of investigation. It is the combination of the dispositions stemming from one's own social class, gender, status, beliefs, values, and experiences. Many researchers typically accept the notion that being subjective implies that we allow bias, beliefs and personal judgement to enter into our interpretation of a state of affairs and therefore cannot accurately conceive of or portray reality as it really is. However, some researchers agree that the existing paradigms and epistemological ideals for research practice, despite their attempts to provide objective and unbiased research studies, are limiting to the expansion of our understanding of many social phenomenon (Eisner, 1991; LeCompte, 1987; Peshkin, 1988). Furthermore, many studies that could be valuable are not conducted because they are not in line with traditional models of research.

Fortunately, research studies using other types of inquiry are gaining attention. Qualitative research involving an ethnographic or a case-study approach is not only beginning to be seen as a promising, viable, and perhaps preferable means of approaching complex social issues but the inherent subjectivity involved in this type of inquiry is being described as having merit

(Eisner, 1991; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Le Compte, 1987). For many conducting a biographical study of one social phenomenon or another, an awareness of subjectivity allows them to manage the impact of self on their research (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Thus, attending to one's subjectivity in the research process is often thought to be productive in that it helps the researcher temper biases and produce "cleaner" and consequently, more valid, value-free research. More importantly, an awareness of and attention to one's subjectivity can also be used to tell the rest of the story, complete the picture, and give meaning to information that is often dismissed as insignificant.

An examination of the factors that make up one's subjectivity can lead us into new and unexplored areas of research and broaden our knowledge base concerning a wide variety of social behaviors. The process of becoming a teacher is one such social behavior and our understanding of that process has been limited because of the current research paradigms. As the research suggests, expanding our understanding comes with realizing the importance of including in our study of teachers, an examination of their subjective lives as well as the objective aspects and with using the openness of qualitative inquiry as our means of examination (Eisner, 1991, 1992; Peshkin, 1993).

Educational Research

As epistemological ideals and traditional research paradigms have in many ways shaped research in general, they have also shaped educational research by the influence they have had on our decisions about our focus of study, the subjects we choose, the methods we employ and the conclusions we

draw (Eisner, 1992). Likewise, in the same way that greater attention has been given to studies that employ the traditional quantitative modes of inquiry, more emphasis has been given to educational studies which seek to define teachers and teaching by focusing on specific components such as the curriculum, methodology or student performance.

Attempts to neatly categorize and define teachers and their knowledge by an agreed upon set of standards have also influenced and shaped what is known about teaching. These same attempts to "neatinize" teaching, as Ayers (1992) calls it, have incorrectly simplified the act of teaching and have created a false sense of control over it. Further, people with little insight into teaching may assume that achieving professional teaching excellence results from acquiring a technical knowledge base (Henderson, 1992). This, of course, supposes that somehow all teachers have, or at least should strive to have, the same quality and quantity of knowledge and further that this knowledge is highly rational and technical and can be codified or quantified for the purposes of measuring their worth as a teacher. While Shulman (1987) posits that there does exist a knowledge base for teaching, it is erroneous to say there is a standardized technical knowledge base that can be taught and should be held up as a model for teacher development. Certainly teachers possess professional knowledge but current research suggests that it is more likely that a teacher's knowledge base is personalized, self-constructed and ever-expanding (Ayers, 1992; Henderson, 1992; Miller, 1992).

Teacher lore. There are educational researchers who are interested in learning more about teachers and who are currently seeking alternatives to the positivistic framework. The notion of teacher lore, described in the simplest of terms as reflection on one's experience, is one such alternative. Miller (1992) describes teacher lore as the "shared yet largely unofficial, informal knowledges, revealed in the telling of our teaching sagas and lived and created in the spaces of our daily teaching" (p. 13). Similarly, Schubert (1992) discusses teacher lore as that understanding which he gains from other teachers' sharing of experiences that help him in his own teaching as well as what he contributes to other teachers from his own experiences. It is this informal telling of stories and sharing of knowledges that is beginning to take shape as a genre of research into the lives of teachers.

In a discussion of teacher lore, Schubert recounts many of his most memorable experiences which have shaped and influenced him as a teacher. He uses caution, however, in defining teacher lore because the notion of lore as a form of research is certainly contradictory to the strict theoretical frameworks and research paradigms that have been in place for studying and defining teaching. To define teacher lore is to give it rules or standards which prevent teachers from telling their stories. In discussing his experiences and reflecting upon their connections to each other and to other's experiences, Schubert is engaged in teacher lore; but these tidbits, insights, muses, etc. have not been thought of as important enough to merit research or codification. Miller (1992) reflects that "our kind of talk about teaching, because of its

apparent meandering and wondering nature, seemed virtually impossible to categorize, to replicate, to control, or to even share with those who did not teach" (p. 13). Yet, she felt that the stories she and her colleagues shared in her early days of teaching did as much to influence and shape her teaching as traditional research studies or theories or techniques she had learned in her teacher preparation program.

Researchers are beginning to collect, record and make sense of teachers' stories for their important insights concerning teachers' self-described knowledges. While it may be true that teacher lore is significant for the alternative style of research that it offers, the actual content of the shared stories also gives supporting evidence that teacher thinking is largely misunderstood because of its complex and elusive nature.

Looking at the "lore" of several teachers from the perspective of different researchers, certain common ideas about teacher thinking are revealed. In separate pieces prepared by Hulsebosch (1992), Jagla (1992), Koerner (1992), Melnick (1992), and Millies (1992), a variety of aspects of teacher thinking and teacher lore are examined from different perspectives, yet the pieces are woven together by certain common threads. Each of the researchers talked to teachers and recorded their stories concerning topics ranging from their self images to their understanding of students to their relationship with parents. Within each of their studies, they asked teachers questions and solicited stories about numerous subcategories according to the themes that emerged in their research. For example, Koerner (1992) saw her themes as

different roles that teachers must play and thus her categories included teachers as guides, teachers as subordinates and teachers as unifiers. While it is true that each researcher had a different focus, the works taken as a whole demonstrate the diversity and multitude of knowledge and experience that teachers must acquire and highlight the everyday nuances with which teachers must deal.

While a seemingly endless list of categories of what teachers think and believe could be generated from the stories shared in the literature, certain commonalities stand out. Because of the subjectivity involved in deciding what is thematic in teacher lore and because of the infinite insights that could be taken from the researchers' stories, only a few of the themes are discussed here. Their importance is not to be dismissed, however, because they are representative of the many possibilities provided by teacher lore in understanding teacher thinking.

First, teacher lore reveals that teachers have a set of guiding beliefs that have impact on their teaching. Melnick (1992) spoke with teachers who said that their beliefs were greatly influenced by childhood experiences, both in and out of school. Other teachers she spoke with named a favorite teacher or a mentor as influential in shaping their beliefs about themselves and their teaching. Hulsebosch's (1992) conversations with teachers about their relationship to parents revealed another source of influence on teacher belief. In this study, teachers shared that involvement with parents patterned their own definition of themselves as professionals. Jagla (1992) uncovered the

connection of intuition and imagination to teacher belief. For the teachers she studied, there is an expressed belief that much of their individual confidence, openness and spontaneity in the classroom, characteristics they maintain to be important, comes from an ability to tap into their intuition and imagination.

Whatever the origin of belief, what teacher lore reveals is that teachers do have personal beliefs that guide them and these beliefs are as diverse as their sources. Furthermore, these beliefs do not come prepackaged but they are personal, unique and dependent on individual experience and interpretation.

Teacher lore also reveals that teachers experience contradiction in their teaching. Koerner (1992) found examples of this in the tension that teachers expressed between their self image and the image that others have of them. A teacher in her study and another in Millies (1992) reported positive self images and confidence about what they are doing but struggled with their uncertainty about what their students think of them and with the negative public image that exists about teachers. Most of the teachers interviewed feel that what they do is important but are also acutely aware of the discrepancy between what they think and what others think and, this in turn, affects their thinking and their teaching. There also was an expressed contradiction between the curriculum as it is handed down to teachers and how they actually transfer it to students. This came from the influence that the life of the teacher has on the presentation of the curriculum. As Millies (1992) states, the curriculum is "influenced by the teacher, for the identity of the teacher is a lens through which the curriculum is filtered" (p. 40). In other words, almost all of the

teachers described by the researchers of teacher lore shared things that revealed what they do in their classrooms, how they relate to their students and how they choose to interpret the curriculum, is but mere reflection of their personal understanding of themselves and of their unique experience.

At present, there is little information available about teacher thinking and most of what does exist comes from teacher lore. However, teacher lore instructs us that what we thought we knew about teachers and their knowledges is not as cut and dry as we might have believed. In fact, the lesson to be taken from teacher lore is in the revelation of the incredibly complex and multidimensional bodies of knowledge and experiences possessed by teachers.

The works reviewed concerning teacher lore are, of course, only the stories, insights and knowledges of experienced teachers. It is these stories, however, that offer invitation to and support for the sharing of the stories of preservice teachers as well. The importance of examining a preservice teacher's subjective life and personal knowledge has already been established in earlier sections. However, the means by which this is done in research has been unclear and significance of the insights to be shared have been ignored, until now.

> Teacher lore, because of its acknowledgement of the variety, breadth, and diversity of focus in teaching approaches and experiences as well as in research of teachers' knowledges, now encourages and enables those particular knowledges, which I once considered to be private and idiosyncratic, to be shared among all those interested and concerned about teaching and learning. (Miller, 1992, p. 15)

Teacher development. Inasmuch as this study is concerned with understanding the process of becoming a teacher, the results of this understanding will hopefully aid in improving teacher development. It is therefore important to consider a few of the current trends in research on teacher development to see the relationship of the virtues of subjectivity and qualitative research to enhance understanding of the process of becoming a teacher. Researchers are advocating a teacher preparation program that would develop teachers to be self-monitoring, self-observing and critically reflective (Bartlett, 1990; Goodson, 1992; Johnson, 1992; Lange, 1990). This kind of program, it is believed, will take candidates beyond training to education.

In addition to the teacher as a reflective professional, researchers are advocating the teacher as researcher as a new and additional emphasis for teacher development (Goodson, 1992; Johnson 1992). Teachers, in this model, are engaged in researching everything from a variety of aspects of student behavior and performance to personal technique and methodology (Johnson, 1992). The classroom becomes a learning laboratory for teachers and teachers become more active in making their own connections between theory and practice. Although most of this kind of research is action research and different than an actual biographical study of teaching, the development of the teacher as researcher opens the door and provides support for teachers who wish to tell their stories but have no forum for doing so.

The notions of teacher as researcher and as reflective practitioner, in combination, give support to this study because while the research takes many

forms, the reflection is more readily encouraged through more introspective activities, such as the keeping of diaries. Few studies combine the two where the teacher does the investigating and the reflection is on her thoughts and ideas and not on her practice or classroom behavior alone. The source is her assumptions and perceptions, and her subjectivity.

> The point in all this is that if we want to improve our teaching [and our teacher development programs] through reflective inquiry, we must accept that it does not involve some modification of behaviour [sic] by externally imposed directions or requirements, but that it requires deliberation and analysis of our ideas about teaching as a form of action based on our changed understandings. (Bartlett, 1990, p. 203)

Our changed understandings are the results of reconceptualizing the ways we seek to study and define teachers to include the voice of the teacher (Goodson, 1992). Giving the teacher a voice and validating teacher lore as a method of research for the purposes of giving ear to that voice, is an answer to the call for research with a focus that listens above all to the person at whom development is aimed, the teacher.

Problem and Research Questions

The preceding literature review highlights the need for qualitative studies that emphasize the significance of giving teachers a voice and that regard the notions of subjectivity and teacher lore as valuable in carrying out that task. The voice of a preservice teacher is particularly important inasmuch as it holds insights for those who want to improve teacher development and the quality of teachers entering the profession. A major goal of teacher education programs

should be to provide the necessary training for the development of more reflective and self-monitoring practitioners (Lange, 1990). In order to do this effectively, teacher educators need to examine and give value to the attitudes, perceptions, beliefs and knowledge concerning pedagogy and content area that preservice teachers bring to and gain from the university classroom. This investigation seeks to collect and analyze data qualitatively to begin answering the following research questions:

1. What general insights and conclusions can we draw from a preservice teacher's accounts of her personal and professional development?

2. If facilitating teacher development means understanding how it already occurs (Raymond, Butt, & Townsend, 1992), what does the biography of a preservice teacher say about the current state of teacher development?

3. What are the major substantive sources of second language teacher development and what can be concluded from an analysis of the data that might contribute to the understanding of second language acquisition and the development of second language educators?

4. What implications do the resulting analyses of the personal and educational biography of this preservice teacher have for teacher development programs and educational reform?

5. In what way does educational research need to be reconceptualized so as to assure that the teacher's voice is heard?

CHAPTER II

DATA COLLECTION AND PROCEDURES

Overview

> The point is this: by monitoring myself, I can create a personal statement that documents my subjectivity... so that I see where self and subject are intertwined. By so seeing, I do not mean thereby to exorcise my subjectivity, but rather to enable myself to manage it as I proceed through the process of organizing, analyzing and writing up my data. (Peshkin, 1988, p. 16)

It is difficult to proceed in telling the story of Mary E., preservice second language instructor and subject of this study, without pointing out where subject and researcher are intertwined. It is awkward, at best, to state here or anywhere in this thesis that I, the author and researcher, am also the subject. However, I have chosen to make it explicitly known here so that I am free to do two things. First, as Peshkin suggests above, I enable myself to manage my subjectivity, as researcher, as I go on to organize, analyze, and write up my data. Secondly, I can openly capitalize on the virtues of my subjectivity concerning my own story and share the insights that cannot be offered by someone doing a biographical study from a non-participant's perspective.

Still, the confines of traditional research paradigms make it difficult to write up this kind of study. Carter (1993) suggests that when telling teachers' stories, the most obvious and often more preferable way of presenting the information is through the use of narrative. Yet, as she and Peshkin (1993) both lament, the languages of researchers deny teachers access to speak for and

about teachers and teaching. I, too, face this dilemma as I organize and analyze my data and especially as I write. For example, it seems inappropriate to recount my story in the first person because of the degree of familiarity it implies I have with my subject, something that would be looked down on by traditional research standards. However, to write in the third person is inadequate because I am telling a story about me. To solve this problem, I have chosen to write in the first person to support the already discussed notions of the virtues of subjectivity and narrative. However, in organizing and analyzing my data, I make use of the concept of a third person perspective inasmuch as I, where appropriate, employ the notions of alienation (Verfremdungseffekte) discussed in Stubbs (1983) and explained in the analysis section of this chapter.

Methods

Subject

As subject of this study, I am a 27-year-old foreign language teacher candidate who is in the process of completing the Master of Arts in Teaching program at Memphis State University. This program is specifically designed for individuals who are seeking proper teaching credentials but who already hold a bachelor's degree in another area. The major emphasis of study in the program is curriculum and instruction. Upon completion of the program I will be licensed to teach French and Economics at the middle school and secondary levels, grades 7-12.

Rationale

This study is the story of a preservice teacher who, although nearly finished with the coursework and other requirements necessary to obtain proper teaching credentials, has concern about the kind of teacher she will become. It began when I, half way through my teacher preparation program, started having doubts about my ability to put theory into practice and concerns about whether or not I felt prepared to be the kind of teacher that I aspired to be. Despite, the fact that, at the time of data collection, I was successfully progressing through my coursework and had demonstrated ability above that required by the state of Tennessee on both the National Teacher Exam (NTE) Core Battery and Specialty Area Test, I wondered what significance the attainment of these standards would have for me in the classroom, if any. In fact, I was contemplating my own self-defined standards about teaching and expressed concern about my perceived weaknesses in some areas, especially in my content area, French. At the same time, in a methods course, I was becoming increasingly more interested in and reflective about my pedagogical knowledge, especially as it related to teaching a foreign language and the ways in which I was going to effectively make use of my knowledge in the classroom.

Interested in finding answers to my questions and concerns about becoming a second language educator, I agreed to participate in a triangulation study in which I would be the subject and would join with two other researchers, as well, toward an expansion of the knowledge base concerning preservice second language teachers' linguistic and pedagogical knowledge. It

was then when I began to investigate the aspects, other than objective evaluation instruments and program determined requirements, that defined me, as a teacher.

Design

As I began my investigation of subjectivity, the design of this study began to take shape. My review of the literature on subjectivity prompted me to start forming questions about my own situation and led me to other literature concerning the value of teachers being reflective in their practice and of telling their stories. In one way or another, many of the pieces reviewed related a need to better understand teachers and teaching so that improvements in teaching could be made. Although that is my goal as well, it is as a result of the dearth of research concerning the life and experiences of a preservice teacher that I saw the need for my study. Besides, as I reasoned, the most logical place to start improving professional practice is with those who are in training and about to enter that profession. My research questions continued to evolve from there and became more tedious and complex as the process progressed.

Overall, the design is qualitative in nature and uses a case-study approach in that it focuses holistically on a single entity, me. I do as Mathison (1988) and others suggest and employ the notions of triangulation by using multiple sources of data to describe and understand the complex and dynamic nature of this particular entity. I include, for analysis, a variety of measures of my background and experiences in order to provide a description of the depth

and the diversity of the pedagogical and content knowledge acquired by a preservice teacher.

Perhaps the most challenging part of the design process came from actually trying to structure the design of the study; or looking for structure where there is no structure. There are no established rules or procedures for doing this type of study, so the tendency to want, as most researchers do, everything from data collection to analysis to fit into a neat, tidy, prepackaged framework was only met with more questions and confusion. Concerning this seeming lack of structure, as opposed to the dominant research paradigms, Ayers (1992) comments, "the idea [of teacher lore and of this type of research] is still in its infancy-more promise than design, more possibility than dogma-and shaping what it is to be is still an open invitation" (p. 154). Therefore, to be precise, it is difficult to define the actual design of this study since it represents a response to that invitation.

Procedure and Instrumentation

Biographical sketch. Using previously prepared resumes, undergraduate and post graduate transcripts, and personal history, I compiled a mini-biosketch that gives a brief history of the events and experiences leading up to the point at which I decided to enter the M.A.T. program at Memphis State. I include this as data for the context and shape it gives to this study.

Diaries. I decided before the true evolution of this project began to keep a diary during my stay in France in the summer of 1992. I did not plan to observe or record anything specific. For the most part, I wrote down

random thoughts about what I was experiencing with my tutor and the French family with whom I lived. The diary is an important data source in this project for the insights it holds concerning me as a future foreign language teacher and my feelings about my own second language learning.

Throughout the 15 weeks of my student-teaching experience in the fall of 1992, I was also asked to keep a diary as partial fulfillment of the program requirements. Again, I was not asked to record anything specific but I took care to reflect on my experiences and not to just write down daily events. I include this diary as data for its insights concerning my perceptions of my developing teaching skills and pedagogical knowledge.

Documents. Throughout my program, in keeping with my course requirements, I wrote several papers, many of which served as reflection exercises concerning pedagogy and content knowledge. Papers that I completed in the Foreign Language Methods and Advanced Instructional Strategies courses were reviewed and analyzed for the specific insights they hold concerning my developing pedagogy as well as my growing interest in my own second language acquisition and the relationship it has to my future teaching.

Literature. If I am to include as my data those things which help to best describe my experiences as a preservice teacher and which define me as an educator, now and in the future, I must include literature as part of this data. The various pieces of literature that I have read throughout the M.A.T. program and especially throughout the process of this project have greatly influenced my thinking and direction as a future teacher. Although a

preliminary literature review was completed, my interaction with new works on teachers and teaching has continued throughout the entire research process.

Secondary data sources. The following are labeled as secondary data sources because they measure the more objective aspects of my preservice experiences and are, in the context of this study, less directly related to defining me and my experiences. They are included however, not just to provide a more balanced picture, but also to serve as a means of comparison. To explain, when I first began thinking about this study, I was especially fixed on my questions about the standards and measurements which would be used to define my ability as a foreign language teacher versus my own perceptions of my ability and I was puzzled by the incongruous relationship between the two. I include these data to highlight the differences in the kinds of data available for describing teachers and to compare the influence of objective versus subjective measures on our understanding of teachers and their knowledge base.

Three different instruments were used to assess my proficiency in the French language. Two of the three measures were used to determine my oral proficiency. The first of the oral measures was the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), which is administered by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. It is derived from the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) Oral Interview and is designed to assess the proficiency level of the interviewee through a structured face to face conversation. After the interview, which lasts about 20-30 minutes, a rating is assigned to the interviewee based on a set of

proficiency guidelines developed by ACTFL in 1986. Ratings range from Novice to Superior with several levels in between.

ACTFL requires that a certified "tester" administer the Oral Proficiency Interview. However, because there are a limited number of testers to serve the needs of all regions, ACTFL has permitted the interviews to be conducted over the phone, as was necessary in my case. I was administered two separate interviews, received two separate ratings and the same tester conducted both interviews.

The second measure I submitted to, also an evaluation of oral proficiency, was the Pimsleur's French version of the Bilingual Syntax Measure. This instrument was originated by Burt, Dulay, and Hernandez-Chavez (1975) in order to collect spontaneous speech samples from bilingual children. Likewise the test used in this study had the purpose of collecting spontaneous speech samples from me in order to provide some measurement of my oral proficiency. It was administered by a French professor from the University of Illinois who showed me a series of pictures and then asked a variety of questions based on the pictures. I was encouraged to use as much French as I knew to answer and I was allowed to ask for clarification concerning a question or vocabulary item, when needed. The entire interview was conducted in French and again, two interviews were conducted. Both were tape recorded, transcribed and then analyzed.

The third measure of proficiency used was the French Specialty Area Test of the National Teacher Exam. This standardized, multiple-choice test is

one of the many Specialty Area Tests administered by the Educational Testing Service that measure understanding of the content and methods applicable to specific subject areas. The French Specialty Area Test specifically assesses knowledge in the areas of 1) listening comprehension, 2) reading comprehension, 3) written expression, 4) language learning, and 5) cultural background. A minimum score of 530 is required by the state of Tennessee and represents partial fulfillment of the certification requirements set forth by that state.

Analysis

Analysis of all of the data provided by my biography was qualitatively-based. The analysis phase was actually on-going throughout the study and as I collected my data I was led to new questions. From the beginning, I gradually compiled my analytic files which contain my notes, particular quotes and reactions to the literature in addition to my data. I later separated and categorized my data and then, as suggested by Glesne and Peshkin (1992) established a rudimentary coding system for the purposes of distinguishing between my categories. As I entered my extended period of data analysis, I scrutinized my data for possible relationships, patterns and trends concerning my content and pedagogical knowledge.

In examining my data, I found it necessary to step away from myself, at times, and read my words and analyze my history as if I were studying another person. In different phases of the analysis process I therefore made use of the

notions of alienation, also known as Verfremdungseffekte, discussed in Stubbs (1983). Alienation or estrangement devices allow researchers to focus attention on what is usually not noticed. By making strange what is familiar, that which is normally taken for granted can suddenly be seen as insightful and descriptive of everyday reality.

It is hoped that my resulting qualitative analysis of a preservice teacher's attitudes, perceptions and experiences concerning the process of becoming a teacher will be useful for teacher educators in developing a more reflective, introspective and research-based curriculum for the development of effective teachers.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

> In order to gain a deeper understanding of who I will be and what I will truly be qualified to do when I finish my program, I believe that it is imperative that I examine my process of "becoming." In so doing, I must ask some difficult questions and make careful observations of myself, my profession, and my chosen discipline. (Document 1)

The above thoughts are recorded in one of my diary entries before the focus of this study took shape. However, these thoughts and musings now give context and form to my story and guide its presentation. Throughout the data collection I have asked questions about and made observations concerning my process of becoming a French teacher. A theme emerges from data examination and analysis that suggests there is a beginning, middle, and end--although tentative-- to this process. Accordingly, this chronology parallels four distinct phases of my teacher development experiences: foreign language learning, the study of pedagogy, second language acquisition, and the student teaching semester. Interspersed throughout these categories is the testing of various knowledge entities concerning language proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, curriculum, instruction, and research issues. The data analysis, then, tells the story of my evolution through each of these phases.

Beginning: Foreign Language Learning

A significant part of being a foreign language teacher is, of course, learning the language to be taught. For many U.S. language teachers, knowledge of the target language depends on their past experiences with formal language instruction. In fact, some language teachers rely solely on formal classroom instruction for their language learning. Others may have additional experiences outside of the classroom or in a country where the target language is spoken. No matter what the experience, all language teachers, at some point, participate in some kind of basic instruction including the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. My experiences include language learning opportunities both in- and outside of the classroom.

Formal Education Experiences

Elementary school. I began taking French when I was in third grade and it was then that the seed was planted. I remembered having a fascination with the language. I loved trying to produce the strange sounds and felt special being called Michelle, my chosen French name. I do not think I truly understood at the time that the words I learned and the songs I sang in that class were actually used by another people but it did not seem to matter; learning French was more like a fun game. My parents encouraged my interest by purchasing a couple of children's stories in French. Those books became my most prized possessions, and though I understood very little, I studied the words over and over and tried to break what seemed a secret code. (The books became a means by which I measured my progress over the years and

because I can read them with full understanding today, I see the growth of my language learning since I began the study of French.)

High school. Of course, understanding and developing my French language abilities did not come overnight. I continued my language study, as a freshman and sophomore, with two years of high school French, all that was offered by my high school at the time. I was shy then and was convinced by my language teacher not to talk unless I spoke correctly. As I reflected on this particular experience, I wrote:

> I distinctly remember sitting in the back of many of my beginning language classes, hoping that I was invisible and therefore would never be called upon to speak. (Document 2)

I loved the language and learning about the French people anyway, but looking back I wished I had learned more of the language during that time. For the most part, my high school instruction involved memorizing and copying dialogues from the text book, learning grammar rules, and making trips to the language lab where we were supposed to perfect our pronunciation.

College. My experience in college was somewhat different. I took four years of French and wanted to major in it but at the time was unwilling to give up my economics major. At the time I was asked to declare a major, I thought a major in economics would help me get a better job, and I had no idea that I wanted to teach.

My college coursework in French began the first year with an elementary French class (see Table A-1, for a complete listing of courses). I could have taken a test to show that my high school French experience was sufficient

enough to place me in the intermediate class. However, since I had not had a French class since my sophomore year in high school, I felt I needed to start with the basics in order to have a foundation on which to build later. The second year of college, I enrolled in the intermediate class (French 101) and with the completion of that course, I fulfilled my college's foreign language requirement. However, I wanted to continue with more advanced classes and so my junior year elected courses in French literature. My first literature class, a general survey of 20th Century French writings, offered the Fall semester of that year, was followed by a 17th Century literature course during the Spring semester. I enjoyed the exposure to the literature but realized that it was not necessarily my forte. I was more interested in the mechanics of the language and learning how to use it. Therefore, during the last two semesters of my undergraduate experience, I chose not to enroll in further literature classes and instead took the advanced French language study course, a class designed for the development and improvement of writing and conversation skills.

My college French instructors were mostly native speakers of the language and conducted most of their classes in French. At last, it was nice to hear real French spoken somewhere besides on tape. However, reflecting on my experience, my French professors' methodology was not that much more advanced than that of my high school teacher.

> While most of my classes were conducted entirely in French, it was the teacher who did most of the talking. When students were given the opportunity to speak, it was only the ones who could speak well and without error. (Document 2)

Many of my professors were very demanding in our oral production of the language and did not have a great deal of tolerance for grammatical errors. Overt correction was frequent and I often remember feeling too intimidated to speak in the classroom. Consequently, I continued to develop my listening, reading and writing skills, but became increasingly aware of my deficiencies in speaking and looked for additional ways to develop my conversation skills.

Immersion in the Language

Summer in France. My experiences with more formal instruction in the French language encouraged me to seek opportunities for language learning outside of the classroom. In fact, I had my first, of several opportunities for immersion in the French language by spending time in France. The summer after my sophomore year in college, I spent six weeks in Paris where I enrolled in a summer study program offered through Emory University. While in Paris, I took courses in French grammar, conversation, and civilization and lived in a pension or French boarding house. I was still learning the basics or discrete point items of the French language with some scattered information about the French people and their culture.

This was my first trip to France, and I was probably more interested in sight-seeing and doing "French" things than I was in language learning. Thus, I did not make a great deal of progress in my study of the language, per se. However, frequenting cafes, touring Paris, travelling to the Loire Valley, Versailles, the South of France, etc., greatly increased my appreciation and understanding of the country and its people. The fact that I was able to

communicate with the French people, albeit in a very basic manner, left me feeling good about the French I learned to that point. Yet, the chances for real life communication made me aware of my weaknesses in the language and thus increased my motivation to further my study of French.

Summer in Quebec. After my college graduation, still interested in improving my French, I enrolled in a another summer study program, this time at the University of Laval in Quebec City, Quebec. Of course, I knew I would receive no credit for completing this intensive program but enrolled for my own personal growth and development. Interestingly, it was at Laval, on a placement test, that I received my first piece of knowledge concerning the level of my French capability. I was placed in the Niveau Supérieur I or the superior level of classes. I enrolled in six hours of courses (see Table A-2, for a complete listing of these courses) that included French-Canadian literature, phonetics, conversation, and grammar. My classes were conducted entirely in French and were taught by native French speakers. I especially enjoyed my conversation class because we had no books or notebooks. Instead we played games, role played, and created and performed skits. There were only six students, so we had a great deal of interaction with each other and our professor. The phonetics class was my least favorite because we had to spend so much time in the language lab, something I hoped I would not have to do in a French speaking country.

While in Quebec, I also lived with a French speaking family. In fact, they were an elderly couple who neither spoke nor understood a word of

English. That I was forced to speak French with them made this experience a tremendous one but quite a challenge at mealtime, when I wanted to make conversation and not just ask isolated questions. This was also my first exposure to the French-Canadian accent, which was quite different from the sounds of Parisian French, and if nothing else, I developed new comprehension skills.

When I reflected, I saw that this experience paralleled my previous one in France because I was able to socialize with fellow students who were also native English speakers and thus did not benefit as much as I should have from the immersion experience. Too many times we spoke English with each other. However, spending time with my host family, and living and getting around in Quebec provided me with real life opportunities for communication in French. It was a fantastic experience and although I left there having improved my language skills a great deal, I felt I was still unable to speak French with a great deal of confidence, fluidity or fluency.

Work Experience

After the Quebec immersion experience, I secured a job in an Atlanta bank and then later in an office in my hometown as a personnel manager. For two years my interest in and acquisition of the French language was placed on hold.

Teaching. While I was at my office position, I learned that a private high school was in need of a French teacher to fill a vacancy following Thanksgiving vacation. I did not have my teacher certification but due to my

background in French, I was hired to complete the remaining school year. I taught French I and French II and chaperoned a summer trip to Paris for some of my students.

Teaching French helped me improve the language basics, especially grammar, and I can say that as a result of teaching it and explaining it to others I probably learned more than I did when I was a student. Organizing and chaperoning the trip gave me a new confidence in my abilities to speak French because my students completely depended on me to communicate our needs and desires while we were in Paris. I found that I spoke French with more ease and intrepidation. Since, out of necessity, I had to communicate for our group, I no longer was conscious of what I sounded like and was more interested in being understood. That teaching position was a major turning point for me. It was the best job I have ever had in my life, and I fell in love all over again with the French language. I loved working with the students and realized that I had experiences with the French people and the language that I wanted to share with others. I knew teaching French was a career that I wanted to pursue, and so I sought a program where I would gain proper teaching credentials.

Overall, my formal language learning experiences were positive. Although much of my own instruction concentrated on correct pronunciation, grammar and discrete point items, I developed a good foundation for further language learning. My classroom instruction did not develop my conversation abilities as well as I hoped but I was motivated to improve my existing

language skills and inspired to develop new ones. Teaching French, an additional source of my formal language learning, was of great value not only for the opportunity it provided for further development of my language skills but for the perspective I gained as a result of being on the other side of the desk. I concluded that part of my development with confidence and enthusiasm and was ready to enter a program that would further prepare me to be an effective second language educator.

Middle Part I: Pedagogy

Overview

At the time I sought information concerning a program that would suit my needs, I was living in Paducah, Kentucky and the nearest university, 40 miles away, did not offer an alternative program for persons already holding a degree but wanting to become certified to teach. According to their requirements, in order to receive certification, I had to enroll in the undergraduate education program and then later pursue an advanced degree in a master of education program. Therefore, I explored other possibilities and discovered I could simultaneously complete work toward licensure and a master's degree in the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program at Memphis State University (MSU). I applied and once accepted, moved to Memphis and began my work in June of 1991.

MAT Program Requirements

NTE Specialty Test. When I entered the MAT program I learned that I was certifiable in economics, because it had been my major and in French, because of the course semester hours I had accumulated in that particular foreign language. In addition, all students were required to take the National Teacher Exam (NTE) specialty test in their chosen discipline. Interestingly, I did not have to be tested in economics; perhaps it was assumed that I had an adequate competence level in that area because it had been my major. I did take the specialty test in French and met the state requirement for endorsement, a score of 520 or better, by scoring 570 (see Table A-3). This score classified me with performance levels of average in listening, reading comprehension, language learning, and cultural background and low with written expression. I remember thinking that my scores were not bad considering I had not formally studied French for over three years. However, I still was anxious about my abilities. Nonetheless, it should be emphasized that according to my program and the state credentialling system, I had demonstrated a sufficient competence level in my content areas: French and Economics.

Coursework. The MAT program was specifically designed for those students who did not study education at the undergraduate level but who already held a Bachelor's degree in another area. Delivered by the College of Education, the program required successful completion of the following courses: analysis and practice of teaching, teaching the exceptional learner, adolescent

development for beginning teachers, foundational studies, media and technology utilization, managing the learning environment, reading and study skills, methods in the content area, family and community relations, models of instruction, curriculum development, research in education, and thesis (see Table A-4, for a complete list of courses).

I began the program with little formal knowledge of teaching or educational theory. I worked through the first semesters of my course work developing classroom policies, behavior management skills, and lesson plans. I contemplated past and present educational philosophies, demonstrated my talents in "bulletin boarding" and remedied my deficiencies in using the dreaded overhead projector. I was learning all those things deemed fundamental to teaching, at least according to my program and state guidelines. Later in the program, as an additional state requirement, I also passed the National Teacher Exam (NTE) Core Battery with scores of Average or High in all three areas of General Knowledge, Communication Skills, and Professional Knowledge (see Table A-5). In other words, I was progressing through the program successfully. Yet, I felt that so much of what I was learning seemed to be disjointed and unrelated to teaching a foreign language.

When I entered the program, I naively thought that everything a future second language educator would need to know would be addressed by the requirements. Of course, what I did not understand then was there would be a gap to bridge my developing pedagogy and my French language learning. In

essence, I did not foresee that the growth of my pedagogical knowledge would highlight the weaknesses of my foreign language learning.

Methods class. When I first started the MAT program I had already taught for almost a year but really had no idea what pedagogy was nor given much thought to the complexity and variety of the knowledges that a teacher must possess. It was not until I entered the methods course in the second semester of the program that I began to think about "teaching" in terms of teaching a foreign language:

> The methods class has been the only class thus far that I feel will serve me in becoming a better foreign language teacher. As a result of the many views and methods presented in the class, I will be able to think critically and utilize the available research as I develop my own beliefs about and strategies for teaching a foreign language. (Document 3)

I was also beginning to see that teaching a foreign language was more involved than either knowing another language or knowing how to teach. There was a connection between the two and I was wondering where, besides in this class, my program addressed that connection.

> Perhaps foreign language teacher preparation requires a different structure than that which is offered by general teacher education programs. Foreign language preservice teachers no doubt have different needs and require different means of support than do Math preservice teachers, for example. (Document 3)

After that class, my interest in second language acquisition was increased dramatically. It was a new discipline for me. I started questioning my own experiences and their value in my ability to teach French and at the same time set private goals for myself of becoming a better foreign language teacher than those who instructed me. My goals became closely tied to my developing

pedagogy and reflect the influence of current literature (see, for instance, Berns, 1990; Kleinsasser, 1993a, 1993b; Rosenholtz, 1985; Savignon, 1983).

> I am extremely interested in learning how to be a communicative teacher and my desire to do so stems from my own experiences as well as current theory. I hope to make my classroom an environment that is more conducive to using the language for communication and not just a place where students learn rules, patterns and drills. I want my students to use the language to learn and not just learn to use the language. (Document 4)

These views were developed in the methods class and later expanded on in an instructional strategies class. I was becoming greatly influenced by the ideas of communicative language teaching posited by Savignon (1983). Her notions of discourse, sociolinguistic, grammatical and strategic competences in developing communicative language experiences for students were a complete contrast to the ways I had been taught. I learned the differences in past and present methodologies for teaching second languages and reflected about my own beginning language learning:

> I am most definitely a product of the Audiolingual method....I don't specifically recall hearing any French spoken, by the teacher or the students, in the classroom other than that which was provided by the recitation of dialogues or practice of pattern drills. We copied dialogues from our text and variety was provided only by our trips to the language lab. (Document 2)

The works of Rosenholtz (1985) and Kleinsasser (1992) on effective schools and technical cultures were also beginning to define my philosophies and shape my instructional goals for my future classroom teaching. I wanted to teach in an effective school where the environment was one of certainty and non-routineness. I envisioned the possibilities of these environments and their provisions for communicative language teaching.

Although I was setting pedagogical goals for myself, and developing my instructional repertoire, I began to feel uncomfortable about my ability to meet these goals without more confidence in my French language skills.

> I believe it erroneous to assume, as in my case, that because a student has completed a sufficient number of credit hours in a foreign language at the undergraduate level, the individual is competent to run a communicative language oriented classroom. (Document 3)

Here I was criticizing my own situation, yet the source of my frustration was evident. I was beginning to understand the complexity of becoming a foreign language educator and the overwhelming task of developing content knowledge that was compatible with pedagogical knowledge. Content knowledge here included not only the French language but second language acquisition (SLA) issues as well.

Time progressed and as I learned more about SLA and became more influenced by literature and current trends in second language teaching, I knew the minimal standards that were used to test me were not enough to ensure that I would be the kind of effective second language educator I wanted to become. In essence, I saw the gap between pedagogy and second language learning and I did not want to be a teacher first, and a speaker of a second language, second. I wanted to be a second language educator. To do this, I knew I had to improve my French even further and at this point, I felt a sense of urgency about this since I would soon be in the classroom.

> Unfortunately, the MAT program is primarily composed of education courses and does not require nor allow sufficient time for taking language courses. Therefore, I have not had the

> opportunity to keep up with my French. I feel uneasy about this as I want to be adequately prepared for my student teaching. (Document 1)

I, therefore, chose to augment my education on my own in the teacher training program with a trip to France in the summer of 1992 for the purposes of intensively studying the language. Although I knew I would receive no credit toward my degree for the work that I did in France, I felt that going abroad was vital to my professional development and perhaps more important to me than any of the education courses required by my program. In addition, my emerging and multi-perspective SLA knowledge base was telling me to do more with my language abroad learning experience.

Middle Part II: Second Language Acquisition

Pretesting: Evaluation Instruments

Prior to leaving for Paris, I decided to submit to testing that would document my language abilities and provide some information concerning my interlanguage. I was administered the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency Interview and the Bilingual Syntax Measure (BSM); the former to get a rating that could begin explaining my oral capabilities and the latter to have some actual recording of my speech acts.

ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview. The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) was completed via telephone in June, and I recorded these thoughts immediately following the test:

> My interview actually went very well. I was very nervous before we started but once we got going, I almost became unconscious of what I was doing or saying and it was over before I knew it. We

> spoke for about 30 minutes and I understood everything he said and asked. However, each question was increasingly more difficult and towards the end, although I understood the question and I knew how I wanted to respond, the complexity of the question required a response for which I did not have adequate vocabulary. I also was hesitating more at this point because I was required to use more complex verb tenses and therefore was more preoccupied with conjugating the verbs correctly in my head before I spoke. (Diary)

When I received notification of the results of my interview, I had been assigned the proficiency rating of Intermediate High according to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines. Interestingly, the thoughts that I expressed above concerning my own assessment of my abilities closely matched the ACTFL characterization of an Intermediate High speaker.

> Able to handle successfully most uncomplicated communicative tasks and social situations. Can initiate, sustain and close a general conversation with a number of strategies appropriate to a range of circumstances and topics, but errors are evident. Limited vocabulary still necessitates hesitation and may bring about slightly unexpected circumlocution. There is emerging evidence of connected discourse, particularly for simple narration and/or description. The Intermediate-High speaker can generally be understood even by interlocutors not accustomed to dealing with speakers at this level, but repetition may still be required. (Byrnes & Canale, 1987, p. 16)

I was happy to receive what I thought was a comparatively high rating. I was told that many high school language teachers received a rating of Intermediate-Mid, so I was glad to know that my French capabilities were at least comparable to other teachers. However, I was still anxious to improve my skills and perhaps even increase my rating to another level.

Bilingual Syntax Measure. The Bilingual Syntax Measure (BSM) was also administered before I departed for France. I remember being nervous

about this interview because, unlike the OPI which I had at least read about, I had no idea what to expect. Actually the BSM turned out to be quite fun as it was essentially a face to face conversation with another French speaker who was charged with evaluating my oral responses to several open and closed ended questions concerning a group of pictures.

I later learned that I had received a level 4 proficiency level with a .916 Syntax Acquisition Index. My completion of the tasks showed that I accurately used morphemes and syntax but could use some improvement.

France Experience

Overview. A major part of the process of becoming a second language educator was learning the French language. I learned from my French classes and from my pedagogy courses that so very much of what a French teacher does in her classroom seems to depend on her personal language ability and experiences in learning the language. My previous trips to France and Quebec were excellent language learning experiences and provided me great insight concerning French speaking people and their culture. However, I decided I wanted more from the trip to France I took in the summer of 1992; this time, I was going to be more aware of and reflective about my French language acquisition process.

I chose a program that promised to be an immersion experience where I would not be in contact with English speakers and would receive private tutoring while living in the home of a French family. Accordingly, I lived just outside of Paris, in the suburb of St. Maur, with a couple and their two adult

children. They did not speak or understand English and the mother, an elementary school teacher, gave me private instruction during the day.

Arrival. When I left the United States, I was very eager to get the most out of my experience in France and was ready to take advantage of every possible opportunity for what I was now understanding as second language acquisition (SLA). To that end, I initiated my first language encounter with a couple who were speaking French on the airplane. I introduced myself and started speaking French with them but when they realized I was American they automatically switched to speaking English. Because I am obviously more comfortable with English, I also changed. I was angry at myself for not continuing to speak French but I knew many more opportunities were ahead.

Because I knew that I would feel out of place when I arrived, I decided to stay in Paris a few days before I met my host family. I used this time to reacquaint myself with Paris, the French language, and the French culture. I reserved a hotel room in the heart of Paris and explored the city to see the wonderful sights remembered from my previous trips.

While staying in the hotel, I had one of my first challenging encounters with spoken French on the telephone (something I had faced while completing the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview). However, in France I was confronted with a native speaker the first evening.

> The only real trouble in communicating that I have had so far was in trying to make a call to the States from my room. I had to call the front desk three times to ask what to do and only the third time did I understand what they were telling me to do. It's difficult to understand over the phone. (Diary)

My second night in Paris found me venturing out to have dinner in a restaurant near my hotel. I remembered trying to ease into speaking French and feeling a bit shy.

> Vous avez une place pour une personne?, I asked, feeling very uncomfortable. Certainment, the hostess replied and then asked if I preferred a table in the front or in the back of the restaurant. Of course, I chose the back because it appeared that there were fewer people to hear me speak French. I just didn't want to call attention to myself. Interestingly, there was an American family seated near me so I felt much more comfortable speaking French to the waiter. I felt a little awkward sitting by myself, though I had a superb view of the kitchen where I was able to watch the only chef (for whom the restaurant was named) prepare all of his culinary delights. I did not feel as comfortable with my French as I have and though I longed to say more, said the minimum to get my dinner and pay the check. (Diary)

A few days later I met my family and settled in my new home. One of my first surprises was when I first met Madame Michel, the host mother. She spoke French very quickly to me and was surprised when I did not respond with the same fluency. Later we discussed my French and she commented on my ability. We also learned the source of the prior confusion. She was able to pinpoint some of my weaknesses and provide me areas for improvement.

> I had put on the application that I was at the intermediate level and I guess, here, that means I am more than advanced. Since my arrival, she has told me that she thinks that I understand very well but I need practice speaking. Of course, I knew that. She said she can tell that when I start to say something I will begin the sentence and then stop because I am looking for the exact words--les mots justes. Instead of trying to be so correct, she thinks I should just speak and she will correct me after. I knew that too. She also suggested that I try to concentrate on speaking faster. (Diary)

Tutoring. Each morning during my stay in France, Madame Michel gave me private instruction. The first day of tutoring was difficult because neither of us were sure what to do or how to best use our time together.

> She had books spread out all over the table. She said she usually tries to go through these books with her students so they will have a chance to review vocabulary and grammar. However, we opened not one of the books. (Diary)

We spent our first few sessions together in discussion; she tried to assess my French capabilities and I tried to convey my goals and expectations concerning my instruction with her. I noted the difficulty in trying to structure the tutoring. Because I am used to classroom instruction and because she is a teacher, we both wanted some sort of organization but found that we were drawn to more relaxed conversation.

> I want to be more organized in our lessons but it is very hard to "organize" conversation. As I said before, I came over here to "speak" French. She agrees that she could be very well organized in her instruction if I wanted to learn from a book, learn grammar and write exercises. From my experience thus far, I don't think there is a way to organize and structure language learning in this kind of environment. I am learning things as I need them. It would be impossible for me to write down everything I say, everything I hear and everything I learn. Yet, I know I am learning French. (Diary)

Quite frequently, the tutoring took the form of conversation about news, movies and books.

> I am reading the story of Betty Mahmoody, Not Without My Daughter, in French. Madame Michel and I are going to discuss it after I finish and then rent the video. It's an interesting book to be reading right now because Betty Mahmoody, an American trapped in Iran, describes her impressions of the Iranian culture and her own culture shock.

She did provide me with a few vocabulary and advanced grammar books that were used in French schools. I worked many of the exercises and then we discussed my errors. The personalized learning and immediate feedback helped a great deal. However, I preferred our discussions and took notes while we talked so I could refer to them in future conversations with her.

Conversations. The best language experiences, did in fact, take the form of conversations. They took on many forms and with a variety of people. I noted different struggles and challenges in each. But I learned a great deal from them and began to view them as additional sources of tutoring. I was beginning to understand the meaning of discourse competence (see Savignon, 1983).

> I prefer being with the Michels and doing the things they do as a part of everyday life to going to Paris. I enjoy conversations with them because really that is when I am most aware of learning the language. (Diary)

Of all the family members, I had the least contact with Monsieur Michel, my host father. However, when we did have discussions they were lengthy and informative.

> We talked for three hours-about everything. We got out a map and he showed me where he was born, where he has lived and where he has vacationed. We had a great conversation and he is always so kind to explain everything. I understand him well when he speaks French, most of the time. He is very intelligent, much like the rest of the family. Those kind of conversations help me as much if not more than the lessons. (Diary)

Monsieur Michel had an interesting sense of humor which was mostly evident in his word play. For example, he often spoke in puns, which, without knowing the social context of the conversation and knowing something about

him, as the speaker, I would have never understood. From observation of his speech, I learned when and how it was appropriate to interject humor in conversation. I also learned how to use his patterns of word play to respond to his comments with puns of my own. Once I learned his rules of communication, our exchanges became quite successful, if not fun. In other words, I was beginning to understand the meaning of sociolinguistic competence (see Savignon, 1983).

One of my most memorable opportunities for conversation was at the elementary school at which my host mother taught. I had an opportunity to see education in France in action and I spent the day interacting with the 7-and-8-year-olds in her class. They were very interested in hearing me speak "American"; apparently that was how they distinguish between English with a British accent and the American accent found in the States. In conversation with them and during a challenging game of pictionary, I noted that the children made the same kinds of mistakes with the French language that I made, and we enjoyed correcting each other.

Difficulties or Uncovering Second Language Acquisition Variables

Although I was benefitting from conversations and interaction with people and was more aware of my language acquisition processes than ever before, I still experienced a variety of difficulties. Part of my frustration was in the dilemma of feeling trapped between my first language (L1), English, and my second language (L2), French. My interlanguage experiences reappeared more often than I thought, and I relay this tension through my diary entries.

> I had no idea that I would become so immersed in the language and in the culture that I would find it so difficult to reflect or write about the experience. I hate to have to stop - to go back into my world of English and write. It is so tedious to experience the world of French (thinking in, dreaming in, and hearing only French) and then to have to write about it in English. It's like having to think new thoughts to describe old ones. (Diary)

> I want to convey my feelings about my experiences and my progress but it all seems so inconsequential. I also am very frustrated because part of me feels compelled to write in French but I cannot express myself with any detail without writing in English and so my journal will probably end up being some confusing mess of 'Franglais.' (Diary)

I also found communication in French was harder in certain types of situations. This was sometimes due to the people with whom I was interacting and sometimes due to my own limitations. In response to these obstacles, I recorded some of the processes I used while communicating in French.

> When I am in a group and everyone is talking I get tired very fast and sometimes I just space out and retreat into my own world.

> I understand very well when I am in a group and one person talks at a time.

> I categorize what people say according to the context and then retrieve it later if I am presented with the same or similar context.

> I try hard to speak correctly. Consequently, I speak too slowly. I am always starting and stopping. I've been told to speak faster and not to worry about mistakes, etc. They think it's better to get the rhythm than to speak correctly.

> Sometimes I have to force myself to speak. It is much easier to listen. I need to speak more and analyze my speech less.

> I repeat to myself (more often silently than aloud) almost everything that other people say. I analyze what is said and then I categorize it and store it for later. (Diary)

While some of the obstacles to communicating in and improving my French hindered me a little, by the end of my second week, I made a breakthrough. When given the opportunity to speak English, I did not, and forced myself to use French while a saleswoman practiced English.

> I went into Hermes to look for a tie, and I tried to speak French with the sales person but she insisted on speaking English. Moi, I went on speaking French. That's a major accomplishment for me because in the past if I detected that the person with whom I was speaking could speak English, I too would speak English. (Diary)

I contrast this experience with the previous one I had on the plane when I switched over to speaking English because the French speakers wanted to practice English. I was particularly proud of myself that I was feeling more certain and maybe even a little bold about speaking French. In essence, I wanted practice in French and for the first time made a directed and conscious effort to use my L2.

Progress. Throughout the trip I was constantly trying to gauge my progress and be reflective about what I was learning, especially in trying to write entries for my diary. At the beginning of the trip, I contemplated my insecurities and indirectly set language goals for myself.

> I am dreading the flight, not because it will be long and uncomfortable, but because I will emerge from the plane forced with maneuvering and manipulating myself around in the world of the "French." Will I try to get the best deal I can or will I be content that I even communicated the need for a taxi and take the first one I can get? Will I be able to communicate with my family? I have to remember to be assertive and to be patient enough with myself to get my entire message across, not just parts of it. (Diary)

I did remember to assert myself then, and throughout the rest of the summer. In fact, I worked very hard at communicating and overcoming my reserve about speaking in French.

At one point I asked my host mother to share her opinions about my French.

> Madame Michel said this morning that I have a fairly wide vocabulary but still I search for the right words, the more difficult verbs, etc., instead of saying things in the simplest way possible. I also hesitate too much. She thinks with only one more month here (or less) that I could make a considerable amount of progress. I have my doubts - I think I have plateaued and I don't know how to reach out beyond myself to the next level. (Diary)

Toward the end of the trip, I began to see some of my progress yet I had difficulty articulating the ways in which I advanced.

> It is extremely difficult to gauge my progress. Yet I hear French all day long and I understand and I must be improving. I have almost become unconscious about speaking and listening. When the Michels talk to each other during meals or whenever, I no longer have to strain as much to understand. I still have to concentrate on occasion. It is difficult to explain what I am doing to learn French because I am more or less unaware of what I am saying or hearing anymore. I just communicate. (Diary)

Defining my progress was difficult, perhaps stemming from the seemingly impossible task of documenting growth in second language acquisition since it encompasses so many variables. It was obviously easier to account for my advancements in foreign language learning since I was able to say that I had passed from this French class to the next one. The boundaries in second language acquisition were not quite so apparent and easily managed.

Nonetheless, I was speaking and understanding with much greater ease, yet I could see the limitations of my progress and was frustrated with my level

of self expression. It was one thing to be able to talk about events, places or people but quite another to actually convey feelings.

> I feel like I can communicate but I don't think my personality comes through because I haven't mastered all the nuances and ways of saying things that reveal something about a person. Although, I must be doing something because the Michels think I am really funny and that I have a good sense of humor. (Diary)

This kind of talk or self expression, whether word play or body language, was often neglected in my language learning experiences, yet I found that it was important to communication and was a very real part of interaction with another person.

When I returned, I made my last diary entry which conveyed, at the very least, I was in the process of attaining many of the goals I had set for myself.

> I would say that I have made a great deal of progress especially in my level of confidence. I now feel more confident and at ease when I speak French, and I have had enough success with the language and in communicating that I am no longer afraid to speak. I still get stuck, and I still search for words. I still have to remind myself that I can speak French as well as I can and I still have to push myself to open my mouth on occasion. All in all I feel very good about my French and I feel capable to teach the language. (Diary)

Post-testing

ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview. After my experience in France another interview was conducted and this time I was assigned the rating of Advanced, one level higher than the previous rating of Intermediate-High. An advanced speaker is described as:

> Able to satisfy the requirements of everyday situations and routine school and work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility complicated tasks and social situations, such as elaborating, complaining and apologizing. Can narrate and describe with some details, linking sentences together smoothly.

> Can communicate facts and talk casually about topics of current public and personal interest, using general vocabulary. Shortcomings can often be smoothed over by communicative strategies, such as pause fillers, stalling devices, and different rates of speech. Circumlocution which arises from vocabulary or syntactic limitations very often is quite successful, though some groping for words may still be evident. The Advanced level speaker can be understood without difficulty by native interlocutors. (Byrnes & Canale, 1987, p. 17)

NTE Specialty Test. After I returned from France, I also took the NTE French specialty test for the second time. I improved my scaled score by 80 points, with noted improvement, from average to high, in the language learning category.

Bilingual Syntax Measure. The second administration of the BSM revealed that my proficiency level was a 5 with a Syntax Acquisition of .947. I had increasingly applied my syntax more accurately.

On the whole, according to each of the three measures, I improved my French capabilities significantly. Still, these were only objective measures and though it was nice to know that I improved, the scores did not have a great deal of meaning for me. I was more pleased with my increased level of self confidence when I spoke French. However, the tests were useful for the purpose of documenting my language learning and acquisition, which was otherwise difficult to pinpoint.

Transcriptions

In my instructional strategies class, I learned about discourse analysis from preparing transcriptions of classroom discourse for the purposes of examining the actual classroom occurrences when a particular teaching strategy

was used. As a result, I became very interested in the insights gained concerning classroom teaching and learning by completing simple discourse analysis. I thought it might be equally interesting and revealing to transcribe the BSM interviews and compare my speech acts in my first interview with those of the second. I found that transcribing in another language, even if the words were your own, was a tedious and difficult process but a great learning experience. For example, it was not until I had to write down the actual words that I used to respond in the interview that I realized I made grammatical mistakes and syntax errors. From this, I learned an important part of second language acquisition was understanding and making yourself understood even if the message that was communicated was structurally or grammatically incorrect.

As I went through the transcription process and then later through the analysis of the discourse I transcribed, I kept thinking that this would be a great exercise for my own students. I saw this experience as one of the many ways I could bring second language acquisition theory into my classroom. It was also a means to understand yet another facet of SLA.

As I noted, the core of my preservice development was my instruction in pedagogy and my introduction to and understanding of second language acquisition issues; the former provided by the program requirements and the latter through research and my experiences abroad. The combination of these knowledges gave me new direction for my further development as a second language educator and helped me to establish additional goals to be attained in my teaching. At last, I was ready for the student teaching experience, not only

according to the state and program requirements, but according to my own personal standards, as well.

End: Student Teaching Experience

The last requirement for the certification portion of the MAT program, a 15-week student teaching experience, was fulfilled in the fall of 1992. Having the pedagogical content knowledge and subject matter knowledge experiences behind me, it was time to see how they worked in real classroom settings. I successfully completed two different placements, one for 10 weeks and the other for 5 weeks, in two different high schools in the Memphis area. While at both schools, I taught under the supervision of teachers whose teaching loads exclusively included French classes (French 1, 2, 3, and 4). Therefore, I only taught French but was responsible for all levels of its instruction, from beginning to advanced.

French in the classroom

When I began my student teaching I was eager to put French to use. I especially hoped that my cooperating teachers would use French with me, in the classroom and with their students, during their instruction. I remembered meeting my cooperating teacher at my first placement and trying to speak French with her. I greeted her with an enthusiastic Bonjour. My greeting was returned with a few pleasantries in French and we carried on a short conversation. But then it was time to discuss the business of teaching, in English, of course. Perhaps we talked about her instructional plans and

classroom policies for the school year in English because neither of us had the specific vocabulary or language training to discuss these matters in French.

We did start the year off speaking French as much as possible in the classroom in front of the students, and I was glad to see that my teacher used French in her teaching. She used French to greet the students, give them directions, and to present the lessons. However, as the weeks passed, the time constraints on her teaching caused her to use English to make her points because it appeared to be quicker and easier to get the lesson completed. I also expected to see more exchange between my cooperating teachers and the other French teachers in the school and was disappointed to learn that even they spoke English to each other.

> The French teachers each do their own thing. If they speak French to each other at all, it is rare and they pretty much just keep to themselves. (Student Teaching Log [STL])

In my own teaching, I made an effort to conduct my lessons in French although it was difficult at times. I found that the students were not used to having to use the language for communicating, and the large number of students in the classes made oral activities difficult.

I did, however, have some very positive experiences interacting with my students speaking French. One of my first tasks at my second student teaching placement was conducting face to face oral interviews with individual students. I asked them questions and from their responses, assigned them grades based on their grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. This was a great experience

for the one on one interaction it provided as well as for the different perspective I gained concerning oral interviews.

> It is interesting to see how the students respond to doing the interviews. They get so nervous about speaking, which I can really empathize with. (STL)

I also recalled another enlightening experience with my advanced students. One particular day we were fortunate to have two exchange students from France in our class. We sat in a circle and attempted to have an informal discussion using French, and I observed their struggles in trying to speak with native speakers.

> Interestingly, despite their ability, they all have the same problem that I used to have and still do to an extent: They are embarrassed, shy and afraid to make mistakes. It was a great experience for all of us, however. (STL)

I encouraged my students to ask questions of the French students and was so proud of them when they tried, even if they did so incorrectly. I desperately wanted to help them but kept my mouth shut and let them speak. I did not want them to feel intimidated by my input because I remembered being in their shoes.

Pedagogy

As a result of my experiences in France and my increased pedagogical knowledge, I was confident and idealistic when I started teaching. I recalled the many things I learned from the literature about effective schools (Rosenholtz, 1985) and how effective teachers collaborate. I made the goals of communicative competence (Savignon, 1983) my own instructional goals and looked forward to providing opportunities for real French communication in my

lessons. I also was anxious to use what I learned in my behavior management course about structuring the physical environment for the purposes of facilitating more interactive instruction but with fewer discipline problems. In other words, I had a great desire to put theory into practice. I soon realized that this might be more difficult than I imagined.

> I was thinking a great deal today about the things I have learned with Dr. Kleinsasser about teacher collaboration. It is interesting how much it does not exist. Teachers are funny people. They are not very open to criticism, but then who is? Most teachers do not like to share ideas with each other nor do they like to ask advice from their colleagues. It is no different here. I am sure they all work together on some things but for the most part they do not have any idea what is going on in their colleagues' classrooms. (STL)

> In my MSU classes, I used to envision teaching as more of a collaborative effort and sharing and communicating with colleagues to be the norm, rather than the ideal. However, the reality seems to be that I have myself, my own resources, my students, and that's it. It's sad! (STL)

> I don't feel comfortable before the class yet, so I stand behind the podium. Yuck! I want to move around but there are so many students in the class and there is barely enough room for all the desks. I feel closed in--and I can't be as expressive as I like to be. (STL)

I remember writing these things not because I felt critical of any specific teacher or school, but I was truly dismayed over the fact that what was good in theory did not seem to be what was actually practiced.

I learned, first hand, the frustration of bringing theory into the classroom when I tried to plan a creative lesson that would be a diversion from the routine textbook activities.

> I taught both French II classes today and I was disappointed. I planned too much. I had written my objectives on the board for 2nd period and didn't get through half of them. But it wasn't a

> bad lesson; things just took more time. I did plan a fun listening activity to accompany a video tape. I wanted them to be active while they watched so I prepared something for them to fill out as they watched and I made a game out of it. It was OK but not super. I'm going to revise it for next period. It's amazing how much you work to plan something creative and it doesn't work as well as you thought. I think that the kids just aren't used to different things and only know how to respond to routine. (STL)

Toward the end of my second placement, I did get the chance to try some of my ideas to make learning French more meaningful and interesting, perhaps even fun (at least from the students' vantage point). I planned to have a party with the students in which we made crèpes (French pancakes). Several lessons leading up to the party addressed cooking vocabulary and reading and writing recipes in French. Some of the students even videotaped demonstrations where they talked their audience through the steps of making crèpes, in French, of course. I reflected on this time in my log:

> It was great fun for them and a super opportunity to use their French in a real life situation. It also helped me to get to know them better. I hope I have a chance to do these kinds of things with my own students because it really makes language learning more fun and interesting and yes, they still learn! (STL)

Observations

A significant part of the student teaching experience was the completion of formal observations of other teachers. I was asked to observe 10 different teachers and write about my observations and impressions of what had taken place during their lessons. This was an important activity because I learned so much from the other teachers. I was especially grateful for the opportunity to observe teachers who taught languages other than French. It was interesting to

compare methodologies and see how different personalities carried out similar tasks. My log reveals some of my thoughts about what I observed:

> I observed another teacher's French AP class. She is fantastic and her French is beautiful. I am so thankful that we get to do observations. In many ways, they help more than teaching, especially if I can ask the teacher for ideas and suggestions. This teacher was very kind to share her classroom policies and some interesting activities with me. (STL)

> I observed a Spanish class today. It was very much like French class in that she has the same types of materials to work with. They also have new textbooks and she told me that with all of the activities, tapes, transparencies, etc., she also has a hard time getting all of it done...She seemed well organized however and moved fairly smoothly from activity to activity. However, she stayed behind her desk the entire time. (STL)

> I observed a Russian class today. I understood nothing except that they were studying the days of the week and were working directly from a textbook on grammar rules. It was a very small class, 5 boys. The classroom was about the size of a large closet and was kind of depressing. The teacher has a good relationship with her students, and she is a native of Russia. These kids are so fortunate to have such an opportunity. (STL)

My cooperating teachers were always interested in the reactions to my observations of other teachers' classes. I got the sense they wanted to hear about the observations because they truly did not know what goes on in other teachers' classrooms. It was interesting to note how isolated teachers feel, especially high school teachers. I recorded my thoughts about this early in my student teaching.

> Teachers have so much to learn from each other and yet there is neither the time nor the effort to do so. I really think the observation aspect of student teaching should continue on with experienced teachers and they should be required to observe each other. It is so easy to get into a rut, especially when you are so isolated. (STL)

When I reflected, my greatest disappointment in student teaching was the reality of the classroom. During my MAT program courses, I had strengthened my pedagogical knowledge, and I developed a significant interest in second language acquisition research and theory. I even improved my French language skills. These things highlighted my weaknesses in my own pedagogical and language development which I tried (and still attempt) to improve with further pedagogical and second language acquisition experiences. By doing so, I hoped I would achieve my pedagogical goals and address second language issues in my teaching with more innovative and communicative instruction. However, as these various forms of content developed, the reality of the classroom severely questioned my pedagogical and language acquisition goals. I soon realized that covering material in the textbook, grading stacks of papers and filling out progress reports were the more realistic goals of the classroom second language teacher.

As a final statement in my student teaching diary, I wrote the following, which in essence summarized my experience in preparing to become a teacher.

> Education is a journey. It has no final destination nor is it a means to an end. True education is beginnings. As a future foreign language educator, I will not teach with the expectation of seeing a fully developed product. I will, however, teach with the goal of empowering my students with confidence in their own learning powers and with the aim of stimulating them to become life-long learners. Mastering a foreign language as well as becoming an educated person is a long and effortful process. Becoming a truly educated person, begins, therefore, not with taking satisfaction from educational goals attained, but from taking pleasure from the process of obtaining such goals. Each day is a new beginning and offers a new opportunity for learning and for stimulation of thought and creativity, for both student and teacher. (STL)

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The focus of this study was to examine the knowledge, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs of a preservice teacher and in so doing tell one story of the process of becoming a second language educator. The resulting analysis and presentation of the data in Chapter 3 was intended to provide teacher educators and other preservice teachers with qualitative insight to utilize when discussing and developing preservice teacher curricula, in general, and preservice second language teacher curricula, in particular.

This chapter looks more closely at the trends indicated by these findings, generating an expanded discussion concerning the knowledge base for teacher preparation. It is meant to be a conversation about what is actually taking place in a teacher's development and serves as a catalyst to spark further conversation about the process of developing teachers to meet the needs of learners for the 21st century.

In order to answer the research questions posed by this study and to provide a more thorough interpretation of the data analysis, I reexamined the questions listed in Chapter 1. I found my questions to be broad and many of their answers to be overlapping. To respond to them in consecutive order would be to provide redundant information. I have instead combined my responses to the five questions into three sections in order to present a synthesized discussion providing for interpretations, implications and major

points to be drawn from my data analysis. Although, I present much of my discussion in the third person, I often give examples and interpretations in the first person, as I find this style best addresses the personal and singular nature of my data analysis. I use the two styles in combination in order to present an interpretive discussion that is, on the one hand, dogmatic and research-based, and on the other, thoughtful and supported by my data.

Thus, the chapter begins with discussion concerning the general sources of teacher development and the insights and conclusions to be drawn from a preservice teacher's accounts of her personal and professional development. Secondly, it identifies the sources of second language teacher development and in so doing, discusses the variety of knowledges, revealed by this study, that a preservice teacher must acquire. Thirdly, understanding of second language acquisition and related issues furthered by this study are discussed. Within each section, related implications are given for educational reform and the possible restructuring of teacher development. The chapter concludes with recommendations and methodological reflections.

Teacher Development: General Insights and Conclusions

As the preservice teacher in this study, I progressed through four distinct phases during my teacher development. As I noted, the different phases were foreign language learning, study of pedagogy, second language acquisition and the student teaching experience. The analysis shows these phases were determined by an ordered program and were not necessarily developmental in

perspective. As I indicated, it was difficult to show connection or relatedness between the different phases. However, throughout the process, I became increasingly aware of the overlapping nature of the knowledges I was acquiring within each one. I found the pedagogical knowledges and content knowledges were not mutually exclusive but their connectedness was vague. There was no visible common thread to my experiences. Perhaps, I was unknowingly acquiring different knowledges that would help me later see connections and make sense of my experiences.

The analysis also showed that the particular program in which I was enrolled developed teachers with a major emphasis on pedagogy in teacher education classes. The content of the coursework was general and addressed the more global issues of teaching and learning. Only one class was offered in which the preservice teacher had an opportunity to learn about theory, methodology, research and other related issues, pertaining to a particular discipline.

Furthermore, the acquisition of any content knowledge relating to a preservice teacher's chosen area of endorsement was assumed to have already taken place prior to entering the program. For example, after my undergraduate transcripts were analyzed and it was determined that I had sufficient credit hours in the French language, no additional foreign language courses were required by the program. If a teacher candidate chose to enroll in supplementary language courses or language programs, as I did, no academic credit was given for this work. In sum, foreign language learning was not part

of the program but rather a prerequisite, and foreign language competence was determined outside of the program, per se.

Teacher Development and the Making of a Second Language Educator

As addressed in the first section, the most clearly identifiable sources of second language teacher development are the formal education experiences, including instruction in the foreign language, educational theory and pedagogy, and the student teaching experience. In addition to classroom instruction, immersion experiences in countries in which the target language is spoken are also part of a second language teacher's development. Further, the study shows that in my particular preservice development, second language acquisition knowledge was provided by a methods class, research, and an immersion experience.

Subjective Growth

In addition to the underlying discrete points of my teacher development, there was my subjective growth. As discussed in the literature review, teachers report a personal growth and development that is more implicit and individual in nature (Carter, 1993; Goodson, 1992). For example, the literature reviewed concerning teacher lore revealed that teachers have a set of guiding beliefs that influence their individual teaching (see for example, Keorner, 1992; Millies, 1992). In addition to these beliefs, teachers reported what they believe about themselves, their work and their profession contradicted what they perceive others may conclude about them. Likewise, this study shows that a teacher

candidate had a set of guiding beliefs that influenced her development as a teacher. These beliefs may be expanded on, contradicted or new ones may develop as the teacher progresses through the preparation program, and, in fact, throughout her career.

This study, in particular, shows that I came to the program with beliefs and preconceptions and my views changed as I learned more about myself, as I progressed through my coursework and as I completed my student teaching. For example, we see my growth in understanding various components of communicative competence. An examination of my assumptions and experiences throughout the preparation process, through the keeping of a journal and through other reflective exercises, helped me identify and develop a significant portion of my knowledge base as a teacher; knowledge that is otherwise ignored by traditional assessment measures and to some extent, by teacher preparation curriculum.

I also experienced contradiction and struggled with issues concerning my self confidence and preconceived beliefs throughout my development. Although the successful completion of my program requirements and the attainment of acceptable scores on the language competence measures told me that I was qualified to teach French, inwardly, I felt I needed more preparation to attain my goals. Having reflected about my personal attitudes and beliefs helped me identify the areas where improvement could be made. Rather than relying on the objective measures of my abilities, I recognized the influence that the subjective or affective aspects of development would have on my teaching and

attempted to reconcile the discrepancy between the two.

Other literature reviewed revealed the significance of the mental lives of teachers (Carter, 1993; Goodson, 1992). Concerning experienced teachers, Carter found that teaching events and inservice development are in fact, framed within a context of the history of a teacher's life and experiences. "As a result," she says, "the central themes are often moral and philosophical, having more to do with feelings, purposes, images, aspirations, and personal meanings than with teaching method or curriculum structures in isolation from personal experience or biography" (p. 7).

This study suggests similar themes are found in the development of a preservice teacher. I reported information concerning my changing perceptions, assumptions and aspirations that, combined, constituted a kind of self knowledge that proved to be at least as important and helpful to me as knowledge concerning curriculum, methodology and educational theory, for example. It was an attention to and reflection about these subjective knowledges that served as a means of checking myself throughout my development; a check that was more valuable at times than the traditional evaluation measures used to assess my progress. It was my subjective knowledge that served as a motivating factor toward acquiring new knowledges, affected how I received and assimilated new information and shaped and reshaped my goals and provided me direction for new areas of growth.

Additional studies that reveal preservice teachers' beliefs and attitudes would be invaluable to expanding the knowledge base concerning the variety of

subjective knowledges preservice teachers possess and the influence they have on their development. The evidence presented here is just a beginning to understanding reflection and the subjectivity of a teacher candidate.

Different Knowledges

This study also identified a sampling of the different knowledges that must be acquired by a second language teacher. Specifically identified are examples of what Shulman (1987) calls pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge and pedagogical-content knowledge. Subjective knowledge, as described above, is also relevant. The study indicates that these knowledges are a significant and collective part of a preservice teacher's development and are not readily acquired through the completion of one phase of development, such as a program, or another, such as experience alone. Rather, the study suggests the acquisition of the various knowledges begins and ends at indefinite points and are interdependent.

My study shows the complex and multi-dimensional nature of the knowledges that preservice teachers are charged with attaining and perhaps many more types of knowledges will be identified as more preservice teachers complete studies with a similar focus and pay attention to particular details. Not only are the knowledges myriad, the study shows that it is difficult to place more developmental value on the attainment of certain kinds of knowledges over others, as if certain others were less or more important in the making of a teacher. In fact, my experiences indicated those knowledges that are self-defined and otherwise difficult to clarify are at least as valuable to my

development as those knowledges, deemed by outside sources, to be important to second language teacher development.

In addition to enumerating some of the various knowledges possessed by preservice teachers, this study raises questions as to when the acquisition of the different knowledges begins and ends, and whether or not they can be structured so they are developed in some kind of sequential or chronological order. The data analysis shows that there is an attempt to structure learning on a continuum without providing an identifiable means for making connections.

My experiences, however, suggest that a preservice teacher has a need for connections. For example, the language learning I had up to the point when I began my study of pedagogy was not sufficient. Why? Did I need to have knowledge about how languages are acquired, provided first by coursework in pedagogy and later by research in second language acquisition, in order to make personal advancement in my own language learning? In turn, was my growth in understanding language learning responsible for the more sophisticated and complex pedagogical knowledge I later acquired? In other words, is there a necessary connection to make between two different types of knowledge before more knowledge about either one is acquired?

While answers to these questions are beyond the scope of this thesis, the questions are posed because this specific research demonstrates the complex nature of teacher development. Such study offers insight to ask and probe further into our understandings. Obviously there is a connection to be made

between the different knowledges a teacher must acquire and not one of them stands alone without the other. However, this study shows that connections, if they are to be made, are mainly left to the student. I wonder if preservice development should have more reflective activities to help make these connections so the inservice experiences will be richer? Further, do we even know if teachers who have been in the classroom make these types of connections and if so, at what point in their teaching careers? More to the point, why should we wait so long to develop educators capable of seeing the nexus between the different areas of their learning and development? The complexity, nuance, and subtlety of teaching are enormous.

Perhaps thinking about restructuring teacher development might include the ways in which teachers must acquire the knowledges, in addition to the enumeration of the knowledges that should be acquired. Guiding these discussions might be suggested notions that learning takes place when connections are made that indicate that topics and knowledges, although presented in a sequence or progression, do not necessarily follow a continuum of thought and understanding generalizable to each individual.

Moreover, the thinking might be persuaded by my story which suggests that my development and attainment of pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge and other knowledges has really been episodic, interrupted and disconnected. This was my experience and in a search for a common thread, I found the link in being reflective throughout the process. Further research and

understanding about this has implications for the restructuring and rethinking about teacher development programs, regardless of subject matter.

Second Language Acquisition

It has already been shown in the data analysis that an understanding of second language acquisition (SLA) is an integral part of a second language teacher's development. It is hoped that all second language teachers have an understanding of SLA and utilize their knowledge to be more effective in their classroom teaching. However, there is little data to support this (Kleinsasser, 1992). Furthermore, until now, there is little data to show how SLA actually affects part of a preservice teacher's development.

This study not only documents second language acquisition issues as a significant part of teacher development but also provides further understanding about how a second language is acquired. For example, I provided through my own reflections about my language learning and my experiences abroad, some of the processes I used, struggles I had and observations I made, as I learned French. This is not to say that my experiences in acquiring a second language can be generalized to everyone nor can they be interpreted to say that there is one specific way that everyone should learn a foreign language. The study does, however, provide an example of how others can get to these and other core issues of language learning and language instruction. The excerpts from my diary, for instance, provide some information about the kinds of questions and observations we can and must ask and make of ourselves if we are to

understand and expand what is known about SLA. Hopefully, my revelations provide direction for others interested in understanding their own second language acquisition and will serve as a catalyst for further research on SLA and how it can incorporated into second language teacher development programs.

Recommendations

> We were originally drawn together by our questions about the possibilities of teachers becoming researchers of their own assumptions as well as the historical, political and cultural factors that framed those assumptions (Millies, 1992, p. 21).

This study recommends, in order to contribute to further expansion of the preservice teacher knowledge base, that preservice teachers respond to the invitation offered by Teacher Lore and become researchers of their own assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and biographies. At the very least, this kind of activity helps produce more thoughtful future educators who will hopefully continue to become reflective practitioners.

Further qualitative research concerning the lives of preservice teachers is also a recommendation of this study. Qualitative research explores the poorly understood territories of human interaction and has great value in expanding our knowledge base concerning a wide variety of educational issues. Moreover, qualitative research is a means by which the voice of the preservice teacher, as well as inservice teachers, can be heard.

There also needs to be an emphasis on the process of doing the research and the value of going through the process needs to be recognized.

The processes are as important as the results. While the usefulness of the process of doing the research is limited to those involved, it does not detract from its significance and contributions for both theory and practice. Once numerous studies have been completed, meta-analyses can seek to uncover trends and discrepancies.

Methodological Reflections

This study was difficult especially in determining the methodology. I realized this in the analysis section when I had a great deal more to say after I had reflected about my experiences. Yet I did not include formal data from which I could take these reflections. So much of my understanding about this study came after my data collection. I wish I would have known the things I know now so I could have included more detailed data within and outside of the various data sources. An enormous part of my development has also been in the process of writing this thesis, which I could not exactly include as data.

Nowhere have I discussed the difficulty I had with the simple act of reflection. What seems to be a simple process was inundated with complexity, nuance and subtlety. It was important for me to pass from one phase to another in order to be more reflective and thoughtfully tell my story. The data analysis and perhaps much of the resulting interpretation seems obvious but, in fact, was not. The process itself. with its tedious and complex nature, was as significant as the results of the study.

A part of my preservice development has also been identifying my process of becoming and gaining an acceptance of the ambiguous and tentative nature of this process. I could not include this information in my discussion of the data analysis because this interpretation comes not from any particular data source I included in the study, but from writing the thesis itself. It has been in writing, analyzing and interpreting my story that I have come to understand the larger process of becoming.

Final Note

The research process and writing of this thesis began and now ends with reflections on the nature and value of subjectivity and qualitative inquiry. I have told my story, and in so doing, I have expressed my views, recounted my experiences, asserted my beliefs and pondered my difficulties and accomplishments. It is certain that my story is singular, but then so are all true stories about a particular life. However, I have told the only story that I am able to tell and it is because of my subjectivity, my familiarity and intimacy with my subject, that I am able to share in thoughtful detail, the unfolding of my professional and personal development as a future second language educator.

My story, is not told because I want or expect it to be taken as truth. Rather, as Peshkin (1985) writes, "when I disclose what I have seen, my results invite other researchers to look where I did and see what I saw" (p. 280). Thus, my story is, above all else, an invitation to other preservice teachers, as

well as to all those individuals involved in the educational enterprise, to tell their own unique and personal stories. In so doing, I encourage them to be reflective about their own subjectivity and to make use of the benefits of qualitative inquiry to tell stories that, collectively, will further enrich our understanding of teaching and learning. For as Peshkin (1993) concludes, "when we understand the processes by which a life or small town or classroom takes on its particular character, we understand something of value" (p. 24).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Table A-1

Formal Language Learning: Coursework for Academic Credit

Course Number	Semester Hours	Course Title
High School		
		French I
		French II
College		
French 01	3	Elementary French
French 101	3	Intermediate French
French 205	4	French Conversation
French 235	4	Topics in French Literature
French 336	3	17th Century French Literature
French 305	3	Advanced French Language Study
French 306	3	Advanced French Language Study

Table A-2

Formal Language Learning: Additional Coursework

Program	Course Title	Credit Hours
Summer Study in Paris	French Civilization	2
	French Conversation	2
	French Grammar	2
Summer Study in Quebec	French Conversation	1
	French Grammar	3
	Literature of Québec	1
	Phonetics	1

Table A-3

National Teacher Exam (NTE) Specialty Test: French

Score Category	Test 1	Test 2
Scaled Score (for entire test)	570	650
Percentile Rank (for entire test)	34	65
Detailed Score (by individual tests)		
Listening Comprehension	Average	Average
Reading Comprehension	Average	Average
Written Expression	Low	Average
Language Learning	Average	High
Cultural Background	Average	Average

Table A-4

Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Program: Coursework

Dept./Course Number	Semester Hours	Course Description
CIED 7000	3	Analysis and Practice of Teaching
SPED 7050	3	Teaching the Exceptional Learner
EDPS 7116	3	Adolescent Development
CIED 7003	3	Foundational Studies
CIED 7048	2	Media and Technology Utilization
CIED 7705	3	Managing the Learning Environment
CIED 7544	3	Reading and Study Skills in the Content Area
CIED 7174	3	Methods Course
CIED 7706	3	Family and Community Relations
CIED 7800	9	Enhanced Student Teaching
CIED 7991	1	Seminar
CIED 7050	3	Advanced Instructional Strategies
CIED 7001	3	Curriculum Development
EDRS 7521	3	Research in Education
CIED 7996	3	Thesis

Table A-5

National Teacher Exam (NTE): Core Battery

Test	Scaled Score	Percentile Rank
General Knowledge	GK 662	53
Communication Skills	CS 675	88
Professional Knowledge	PK 674	92

APPENDIX B

Explanation of Documents

Several quotes found throughout Chapter 3 are followed by references indicating the quote was taken from a specific document, followed by its corresponding number. A brief explanation of the individual documents is given below:

Document 1: This refers to a Biosketch of my educational, work, and language learning experiences. I prepared the information in June of 1992, before I left for France.

Document 2 and Document 3: Both refer to papers I prepared for the methods class in which I summarized and gave reaction to the following journal articles:

Document 2:

Phillips, E. (1991). Anxiety and oral competence: Classroom dilemma. The French Review, 65(1), 1-14.

Document 3:

Strasheim, L.A. (1991). Preservice and inservice teacher education in the nineties: The issue is instructional validity. Foreign Language Annals, 24(2), 101-107.

Document 4: This refers to a paper I prepared for the methods class in which I research and discussed the tenets of audiolingual methodology versus the notions of communicative competence given by Savignon (1983).